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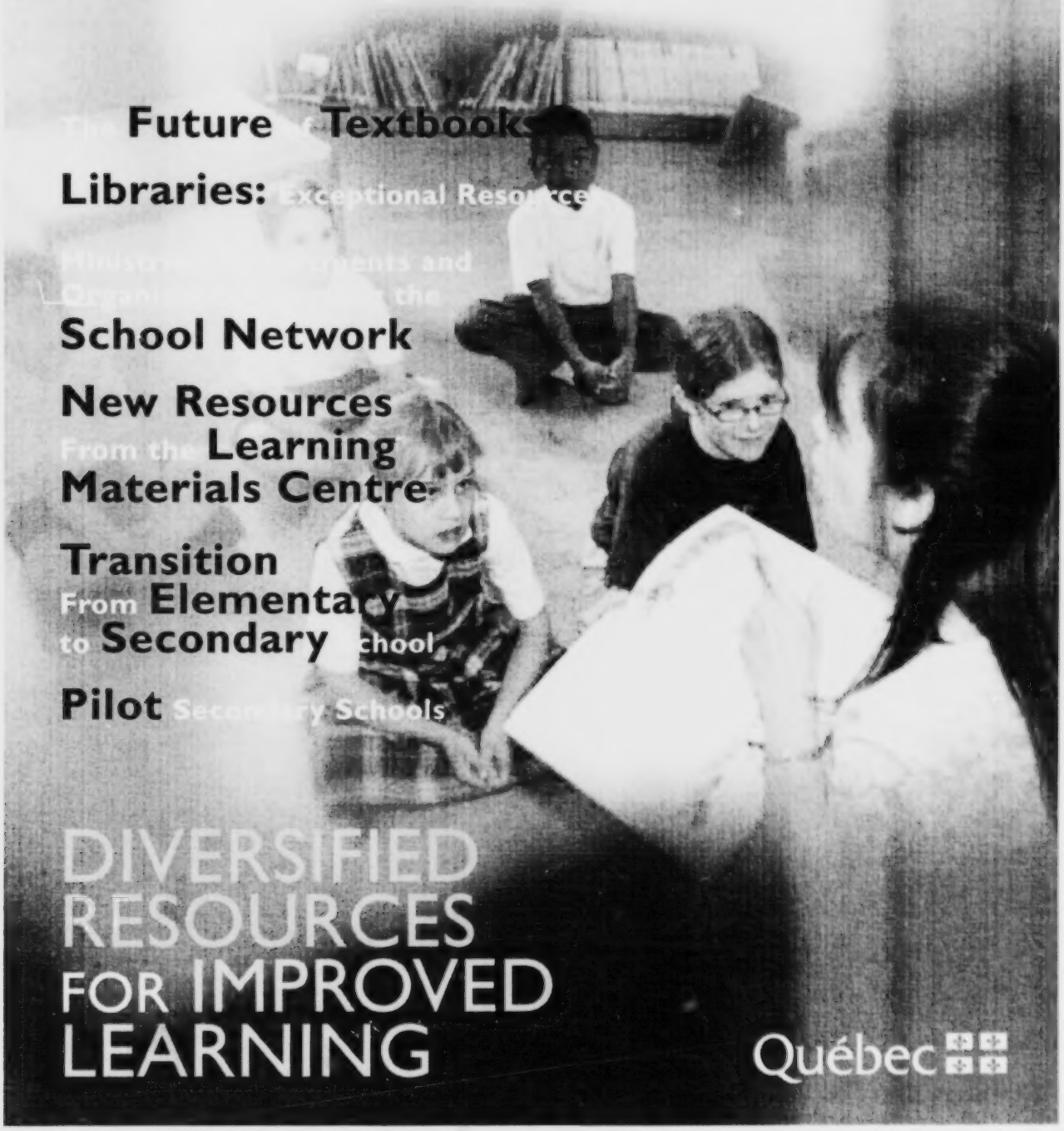
# SCHOOLSCAPES

WORKING TOGETHER **TO INSTRUCT, SOCIALIZE AND PROVIDE QUALIFICATIONS**



**Future Textbooks**

**Libraries: Exceptional Resource**

**School Network**

**New Resources From the Learning Materials Centre**

**Transition From Elementary to Secondary School**

**Pilot Secondary Schools**

DIVERSIFIED RESOURCES FOR IMPROVED LEARNING

Québec

2007-03551/

# Summary

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**COVER PAGE**
Geneviève Vallières,
Pensionnat des Sacrés-Cœurs

By Francine Payette

This first 2003-2004 edition of *Schoolscopes* underlines the importance of providing students with diversified resources to stimulate their intellectual curiosity, meet their interests and enable them to make learning more meaningful.

The traditional textbook can no longer be the only source of reference. The variety of activities designed for students and the diversity of pedagogical approaches used require consideration of other learning methods. School or public libraries contain an abundance of literary and documentary resources, making them an essential complementary service.

Various ministries and governmental organizations contribute significantly to the production of learning activities and materials. Since January 2001, these units have been working within an interdepartmental committee that was set up to adapt such tools to the Québec Education Program (QEP).

As well, the Learning Materials Centre, established by the English Educational Resources Foundation, has just launched a new series of science and technology resources for teachers in English elementary schools. This was a collaborative project involving several partners.

Finally, *Schoolscopes* takes a look at the 15 pilot secondary schools that began an intensive integration of the QEP one year ago.

Have a good read!

*A meeting of the minds*

By Pascale Sauvé
*(Translation)*

Textbooks will continue to be used in the classroom. This is the conclusion of the teaching resource evaluation committee, the Comité d'évaluation des ressources didactiques (CERD)—presented in a brief that was submitted in July 2002—after 14 months of reflection, reading and consultations with stakeholders and researchers.

The committee decided on the relevance and value of teaching materials by recognizing that they are a link between the QEP and teachers. They are also tools to support teaching, learning and professional autonomy, a reference for students as well as for those who work with them, and a way to give culture a more prominent place and to promote societal values.

"It is essential to be clear about the role and functions of teaching materials if we want to ensure they evolve with the reform," explains Michel Aubé, President of the committee. In the course of its work, the committee not only reflected on the usefulness of the materials, but also on people's expectations within the current context for their quality, content and form.

## The choice is up to schools

Schools will have to choose the textbooks that best suit them from those approved by the Minister of Education. "It would be wrong to believe that the teaching kits approved for a program of study in a given cycle are identical. Quite the contrary," says Roger Vézina, director of the Direction des ressources didactiques.

Observations have shown that textbooks and teaching guides vary considerably in certain respects. Vézina cites the level of interaction between students and teaching staff or among students; the nature of learning situations; the leeway in terms of creativity and initiative allowed to students; the evaluation methods; the diversity of pedagogical approaches; flexibility in planning and openness to the use of other resources, etc. "In short, ideal material does not exist," admits Vézina. "Teaching staff must be comfortable with the resources, given their teaching style, values, the community in which they work and the students with whom they are dealing."

### A few words on the teaching resource evaluation committee

The committee was created in 1997 in accordance with section 477.8 of the *Education Act*. It is composed of 13 members, including school administrators, teachers, pedagogical consultants, parents and a university professor. Its mission is to advise the minister on any matter relating to textbooks, instructional material or classes of instructional material.

To find out more about how teaching materials are approved, you may consult the September–October 2002 edition of *Vie pédagogique* [www.viepedagogique.gouv.qc.ca], or the Web site of the Bureau d'approbation du matériel didactique [www3.meq.gouv.qc.ca/barmd/menu.asp].

## Recommendations

**The brief contains several recommendations. Aubé summarized the most important ones.**

The committee proposes maintaining basic materials for each subject and each target group. It reaffirms the need to maintain its approval system. "This process ensures that Québec society has access to high-quality teaching materials," says Aubé. At present, each textbook released in the school network is first submitted to the committee, which issues a recommendation regarding the approval of the materials following consultation with an expert panel and evaluation. The Minister of Education ultimately approves instructional materials.

The committee insists on the importance of the material as a support for professional autonomy. "The tools should not impose a single standard, but allow for several types of activities, methods and pedagogical approaches," adds Aubé. "We need flexible materials."

Finally, the committee favours books and printed material. "We firmly believe in the importance of new technologies, but we still consider books to be the best option. Needless to say, we must diversify, create and combine resources, and find the best possible synergy between books and the new communications tools."

By Pascale Sauvé
(Translation)

# When the Conviction Is There...

**When Marcel Fournier, principal of Douville elementary school in Saint-Hyacinthe, glances at the new library, his eyes light up. "It's wonderful," he exclaims. "A dream come true." Today, Cycle One students are in the library, sitting on the floor, eating, laughing and singing: it's grandmothers' day. Each week, they come in to read to the children. Thanks to them and to dozens of other volunteers, the new library has become a wonderful success.**

It's hard to imagine how our library was before: no larger than a classroom and, if I may say so, in such a pitiful state," recalls Fournier. "And because of a lack of classroom space, the library was also used to teach English as a second language, cutting down on the number of hours students had access."

Today, in the heart of the school, there is a large, inviting room, sporting freshly painted yellow and blue walls. Everything has been thought out: a small children's corner with tables and chairs fit to size, a work space for older children with tables that can be moved as needed, a music listening station and a research corner with three computers.

## In the beginning

The story of the new library began four years ago. The initial motivation was the lack of space for the daycare service, with its approximately 260 students—i.e. more than half of the students attending the school. The rooms set aside no longer satisfied the demand. "Our one advantage was that our daycare service was in a good financial situation," says Fournier. "We had a certain amount of money available." All that was needed was to figure out how to use it appropriately. "It is said that money creates division—but projects often bring people together." After searching for a solution, a proposal was put forward: build a new space that would house both the daycare and the library.

"We then shared our beliefs and built a common vision. Reading is one of the most precious legacies we can hand down to our children," explains Fournier. "We also believe that all students can enjoy reading, especially students with learning difficulties." This idea was developed by Anne-Marie Aubin, children's book author, storyteller, children's literature professor and volunteer at École Douville. "Reading is about meeting others," says Aubin. "A guy who is unlucky in a love relationship won't give up dating women for life, will he? One day, you have a chance encounter, you experience an extraordinary moment of fulfillment while reading a book, just as you would in love, and it is so exhilarating that you want to share it with others."

This vision was carried out in even the smallest details. For example, the people involved in the project thought about how to cover the books. "Holding a book is a sensuous experience," explains Fournier. "Smelling and touching are part of the pleasure of reading. We are also aware of how fragile a book is. Before, we used to cover them with plastic material; now we use MACtac. It protects the books without altering them as much. We wanted children to have a real, direct contact with books."

Keeping in mind that beauty attracts beauty, music is played in the hallways to create ambiance. In the library, the old bookshelves were restored, given a fresh coat of paint and fitted with wood trimmings that give them an old-fashioned look. Dried-flower montages, created by students in the *Fleuristerie* (floriculture) program at the local vocational training centre, liven up the space, as do the magnificent paintings and stained-glass windows that adorn the walls and windows, created by Marie Clarys, a local artist. "We had a vandalism problem at the school, not serious, but present nevertheless," says Fournier. "We created an enjoyable space, with the idea that beauty attracts beauty. Having explained this to the children, they now respect their environment."

## Working together

All these people contributed to the project, which added beauty and scope. As soon as the idea was put forth, members of the governing board, staff, parents, and all the school's stakeholders added their support. "We are lucky at Douville," says Fournier. "During volunteer day, there were over 40 guests. It was fantastic." Grandmothers read to children, parents come to school two or three times a week to reshelve library books, local artists take time to meet the students. The doors at École Douville are wide open. "The more people that come to school, the better. We have incredible people we can depend on in the school and in the community."

"When I heard such comments from the principal, and saw that he shared my beliefs, I immediately got involved, wholeheartedly!" says Aubin. She was of great help in choosing the new books for the library—since, during the move, a thorough cleanup was made and some 3 000 obsolete books disposed of to make room for new ones. She trained teachers on how, for example, to get students to enjoy reading and to place books at the centre of the learning process. "The library should serve not only as a place to borrow books, but also as a place for learning, leading groups and carrying out projects," says Fournier. "It's not just a physical space, but also part of an educational culture. Our collection is growing from year to year; how do we make use of it? We have to change our practices."

People involved in the project also conceived a plan to give culture a more prominent role at the school. "We developed the following objective: to celebrate imagination in all its manifestations and to meet artists and artisans," explains Fournier. Theatre, visual arts, dance, music and literature were spotlighted. Students attended artistic productions, created and performed works, and met artists, including local authors. This completed the picture.

At École Douville, people are happy with the way the project was developed. "The result can be seen in their pride. This project has fostered a sense of belonging and brought people together," notes Fournier. "Within a community or a school, people look to create a community life," believes Aubin. "If we want people to get involved, we need to create a sense of belonging." Mission accomplished.

*"We believe that all students can enjoy reading, especially students with learning difficulties."*

By Eve Kraken

# When the Conviction Is There...

**The library at Roslyn School has a particular physical characteristic: a hallway cuts right through it. This has disadvantages (for example, it's hard to build up an atmosphere when reading to young kids because you invariably get interrupted by a class on its way to the science lab), but it has one huge advantage: the library is always open. And for Mary Moroska, that's how a library should be.**

Moroska has been a librarian for 15 years, with 12 of those spent at Roslyn School. Although she's only there 50% of the time (the other 50% is divided between Dunrae Gardens and Hampstead elementary schools), by splitting that time over five afternoons, she can ensure enough continuity to carry out several projects.

## Reading club

For the past two years, she has run a reading club for Elementary Cycle Three students. Last year, 15 kids participated, about half boys and half girls. They met eight times during the year, at lunchtime, discussing one book per month. "It's an enrichment activity for kids who like to read," Moroska explains. "I run it like an adult book club, not like a classroom. We discuss and critique the book, trying to find the good and bad points, whether we agree with the author, etc." She chooses only new books and tries to cover a variety of genres. "The point is to introduce the children to books they would not have read otherwise."

The club is open to adults as well—as long as the kids still dominate the floor. Moroska has had a few parents and teachers come to observe. "It really opens their eyes to see how mature some of these kids are. They might not be mature in how they act outside or how they play, but certainly when they discuss things in the club, their ideas are extremely adult-like."

*For the past two years, she has run a reading club for Elementary Cycle Three students. "The point is to introduce the children to books they would not have read otherwise."*

## Collaboration with teachers

Moroska has dual qualifications: she was a teacher for six years before studying to be a librarian. Because of this educational background, she is comfortable working closely with teachers and even going into classrooms to teach specific units. Since the school has a French immersion program, one unit is on the French *bande dessinée* as a genre. The class explores the differences with English-language comic books or comic strips, examining not only the different situations, stories and drawings, but the whole cultural background as well.

She also teaches a poetry unit, "running the gamut from Dr. Seuss to Yeats and T.S. Eliott." This has led to what is slowly becoming a tradition: a poetry reading at the open house in May. She makes use of kids' love of music, rap and rhythm, instead of alienating them with too much analysis. "They need to have the joy of playing with language and letting it rattle off their tongue in a way that's a lot of fun."

## Integrating library resources

Another important aspect of her job is working in close collaboration with teachers to make resources available to the students. If the science teacher is covering a specific topic, for example, Moroska will pull out all the related material so that students can come consult it, either during class, at lunchtime or after school.

Unfortunately, she can't do all the things she does at Roslyn at her other two schools, because she's simply not there enough. She's at Dunrae Gardens three mornings a week, and at Hampstead School only two. And at Hampstead, when she's not there, the library is closed. "What message are we sending these kids?" she laments. "My biggest frustration is that I cannot give one tenth of what is needed."

For this reason, she considers herself privileged to work at Roslyn School, where the community has invested in the library and has the resources and volunteer base to keep it open continually. "Every school should have what I have here," she said. ■

*"Complementary educational services offer students many opportunities to deepen their classroom learnings and transfer them to everyday life. The coordination of instructional services and complementary services is crucial."*

*Complementary Educational Services: Essential to Success*, p. 16

By Marie-Hélène Cyrenne
(Translation)

# When the Conviction Is There...

**When she started out as principal of École Plein-Soleil, in Saint-Étienne-de-Lauzon, Lucy la Rochelle discovered a library that she considered to be "a shambles" because it had progressively been diverted from its primary function. Without hesitating, she started an impressive transformation of the space with the help of teachers as convinced as she was. *Schoolscapes* met Lucy la Rochelle along with Guylaine Deschênes and Martine Tremblay, two Cycle One teachers at École Plein-Soleil who took an active part in this successful operation.**

In my opinion, a library is the heart and soul of a school. I have always worked towards making this space the centre of the teaching process, of learning and school life. To give students access to the library is to give them the key to unlock the power to build their knowledge," says la Rochelle. To achieve this objective, la Rochelle and her team of teachers recruited volunteer librarians from the community. On top of the two periods per cycle dedicated exclusively to activities in the library, students now have access to this exceptional source of discovery every day.

Once the library's shelves were filled (thanks in part to a partnership agreement reached with the municipality of Saint-Étienne-de-Lauzon), the library was ready to resume its role and to support projects. "I said to myself that we had to implement a collective project in the school that would make children want to read," la Rochelle recalled. "I strongly believe in the power of group projects because they allow participants to develop a process, to find tools and to progress. In school, everyone does not have the same concerns. Group projects therefore add another dimension: they bring people together by offering a structured way to proceed, with resource persons and the support of the school team." Martine Tremblay was immediately interested in the new principal's vision and formed a work team, which Guylaine Deschênes joined last year.

For the past three years at École Plein-Soleil, each fall the whole school has rallied around a common theme. First it was poetry, then tales. This year, the theme is the fauna and flora of Québec. How are such projects developed?

First of all, starting in September, students chose a subject that interested them under the broad theme of *Expo de la science à la terre* (Earth to science expo). They then illustrated their research project by creating a stained-glass window using Pebeo acrylics. The stained-glass windows were integrated into a collective work, which is now on exhibit at the school's library.

In October, during the official launch of the project, a group leader dressed as a mad scientist came to École Plein-Soleil to introduce students to the new computerized classification system and the proper way of handling books. Back in class, students decided on a general research subject with their teacher. For example,

*For the past three years at École Plein-Soleil, each fall the whole school has rallied around a common theme.*

students in the second year of Cycle Two studied some of the different flowers of Québec. One of the school's resource persons then developed a computer model to serve as a basis for students' research. Following the winter holidays, students got down to work on their individual documentary research projects. This research was not done simply on sheets of paper, but involved wonderful and surprising giant-sized dicos[1].

In April, a project director organized an exhibit of works, and students created ceramic pieces representing the plant or animal they had been studying since January, during a half-day workshop led by a local artist. Finally, in early May, the entire community of Saint-Étienne was invited to the grand unveiling celebration. The most extraordinary thing about the dicos is that, like the tales from the previous year, they are now on the library's shelves and serve as exceptional reference documents.

The impact of such a library approach is manifold. Similar projects allow students to be their own primary resource persons in their learning, to develop autonomy in their search for more knowledge, to become familiar with reading and to stimulate their curiosity for the world that surrounds them. Moreover, the multidisciplinary nature of the project (a mix of sciences, reading and writing, arts, mathematics, etc.) provides teachers with significant evaluation tools, dicos being similar to portfolios. Students also develop their cross-curricular competencies: they use information, cooperate with others, exercise their critical judgment, use creativity, adopt effective work methods, use ICT and communicate their knowledge.

This explains why a young girl from École Plein-Soleil, who was walking on the side of the road after a downpour, avoided stepping on an earthworm lying on the sidewalk and said to her father: "Look dad, it's an earthworm. Did you know they can live up to 17 years of age?" ■

[1] *Dicos: Reference work for young children that includes bricolages, small windows that can be opened to reveal hidden information, etc.*

## Beyond School: Using Public Library Services

*"In order to better guide students, partnerships need to be consolidated, mechanisms for working together have to be set up, and approaches must be developed for working in both local and regional networks, depending on the situation. . . . The school is no longer alone in fulfilling its mission."*

*Complementary Educational Services: Essential to Success*, p. 24

All stakeholders working in school to ensure student success are increasingly of the opinion that schools are part of a greater educational community with a wide variety of human and material resources to foster student learning. In its visits to several secondary schools, *Schoolscapes* gathered comments from students, teachers and other members of the staff that express a great interest for local public libraries. All recognize their specific wealth of materials and also confirm that libraries allow students to have access to an exceptional bank of knowledge. Furthermore, public libraries contribute to the development of students' cultural autonomy.

In this respect, why not take advantage of the activities organized during Public Library Week. You can draw up an action plan aimed at developing students' practice and enjoyment of visiting libraries, both the one in school and the local public library, on a regular basis.

On the following pages you will find information on Public Library Week, reports that sum up the various comments made by stakeholders and some ideas for projects that teachers could implement during the year. ■

## Beyond School:

**The 5th edition of Québec's Public Library Week will take place from October 19 to 25, 2003. This year, activities are intended especially for young people aged 13 to 17. With the theme *Excess Fun!*, the week's objectives are twofold: to raise young people's awareness of the many services offered by public libraries and to encourage them to become members.**

# What They Said...

*"One Sunday afternoon, I was at my local public library when I noticed someone who seemed familiar to me. I went closer and recognized Myriam, a student to whom I had taught French a few years ago. Without any prompting on my part, she admitted to me that she regularly felt the need to come to this library. A feeling of warm pride swelled within me: I realized that beyond what I had taught in class as a teacher, the simple act of having introduced my students to the public library had perhaps developed in Myriam a delight in cultivating her curiosity, by herself, on her own time."*

An Education Consultant

*"I have one project this year that is very close to my heart: to set up a plan to develop the resources available to students, in both the school and the surrounding community. I intend to meet with my entire team to talk about the QEP, the school's educational project and the human and material resources that we have, including those of the school library. But I don't want to stop there. In terms of documentary and literary resources, I'd like to use a pedagogical day to organize a meeting between my staff and the heads of the municipal public library. The goal would be to work together, to see how these specialists take our young people's competency development into account when planning their activities, and how we, for our part, can inform our students of the fundamental resources they can make use of by visiting the library."*

A Secondary School Principal

## Programming

Teens and their teachers are invited to take part in a true celebration of libraries!

Throughout the week, hundreds of libraries across Québec will organize activities on topics of interest to young people: cinema, music, sports, fashion, electronics, computers, love, sexuality, violence, drugs, the future, money, etc.

There will also be a contest for young people aged 13 to 17. To be eligible, participants must validate their entry ticket at their neighbourhood public library. Numerous prizes will be awarded.

## Promotional Tools

Keep an eye out! Toward the end of September or beginning of October, principals of all public secondary schools will receive:

- posters promoting the Public Library Week contest
- informational brochures on Public Library Week, modern libraries, the contest and related activities

The program of activities can be viewed at <www.bpq.org/semaine>.

Collaboration of all teachers—especially English and French teachers—is essential to ensure this week's success.

## Event Spokesperson

Actress Geneviève Rioux will promote the event in the Québec media. She will invite young people to discover the resources at their municipal library.

*"It was a Saturday afternoon and I had agreed to baby-sit my neighbour's two young children. Usually, it's no problem, they're easy to take care of. But that Saturday it was raining, and they were bored and restless. Even computer games couldn't keep them happy. Then I remembered that the neighbourhood library is open on Saturdays. A half-hour later, there we were. Eventually, it was hunger that brought us out of our bubble and back home. I realized that the children and I, each in our own way, had been passionately engaged in a world of discovery. After that, there was no more bickering over the same toy in our cramped little space! The world was open to us, available day, night and weekends."*

A Secondary III Student

*"Some teachers bring their students to the library on a regular basis. I find that important, because it develops in students the habit of going to find information, just as they will have to do on their own once they finish school. The teachers help the students discover the resources themselves, in specialized places, rather than having them believe that the information will come to them, in the classroom or on a computer screen. As for myself, I make a point of encouraging students to push their information gathering a step further by regularly visiting their local public library. I even have a special shelf displaying some of the latest books that they can borrow at the municipal library. I am probably one of the school library technicians with the greatest number of students who are members of their local library."*

A Library Technician at a Secondary School

*"I find it imperative to introduce my students to all the intellectual and cultural resources that the school and the municipality makes available to them. At school, we obviously provide them with many resources, but they are directly tied to our school mandate and to the age of the students in the school. At the public library, students can discover a wide variety of resources, which are updated regularly, offered on print and electronic media, and intended for all ages. In addition, they can go to the library in the evening or on weekends, whenever they feel like it or are wondering about something. I therefore consider it my educational duty to inform them and stimulate their interest in expanding their network of cultural and information tools."*

A Secondary IV Teacher

## a Physical Education teacher in secondary school and I wanted to encourage my students to adopt an active lifestyle

I would have in mind the educational aim of the broad area of learning *Health and Well-Being*, which is to ensure that students develop a sense of responsibility for adopting good living habits.

I would propose that students each develop a personal physical activity plan to help them acquire healthy living habits.

Before creating this plan, students could carry out research at the school library. This research could be continued outside class time at the nearest public library.

Access to documentary resources outside the school enables students to develop the competencies to use information and to adopt effective work methods. Consulting periodicals would help them define what they consider to be a healthy body. This research could also help them to identify a few people whom they consider models in terms of having healthy living habits.

The students could report what they discovered in the school and public libraries, discuss their choices in class, and then finalize their physical activity plan.

*"To equip students means to provide them with the means to succeed in school. The careful selection of instructional materials, ready access to technical help and good communications tools, and an attractive, well-stocked documentary resource centre are ways of providing quality support."*

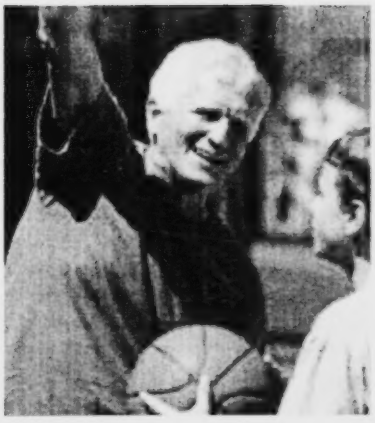
*Complementary Educational Services: Essential to Success*, p. 33

## a French teacher in secondary school

I would think of the educational aim of the broad area of learning *Personal and Career Planning*, which is to enable students to become familiar with the world of work, social roles and occupations and trades so that they can find their place in society. A better knowledge of their local public library could help achieve this goal.

I would propose a team research project covering the municipal library from four different angles. Over a period of several days, students would go to the library to observe, ask questions and take notes in order to better understand the services offered by the library. Each team would focus on one of the following aspects:

- Categories of people visiting the library, the busiest times, activities offered, etc.
- Trades and occupations required to ensure the proper running of the library: the circulation clerks, clerks offering reading assistance, librarians, library technicians, etc.
- Trades and occupations indirectly called on in order for this library to exist: authors, editors, printers, publishers, architects, contractors, skilled workers, etc.
- Financing of this community service, where the funds come from to pay the employees, the percentage of the municipal budget allocated to library services, the role of municipal counsellors in this department.



## a Moral Education teacher in secondary school

I would begin with the educational aim of the broad area of learning *Citizenship and Community Life*, which is to enable students to take part in the democratic life of the classroom or the school and develop an attitude of openness to the world and respect for diversity.

I would propose that my Secondary IV students set up a project to improve the quality of life in their environment.

In small groups, the students would carry out research to deepen their understanding of the issue. In class, I would hand out a list of names of men and women who devoted time and energy to a humanitarian cause (e.g. Henri Dunant, Lucille Teasdale, Martin Luther King, Abbé Pierre). The team would then discuss and choose one historical figure.

I would encourage the students to conduct their research using a grid to compile the data. They would go to the municipal library to consult non-fiction works. This visit could be followed by an examination of the importance of libraries for sharing ideas and information with people who are concerned with passing on this knowledge. This discussion would also focus on why human beings feel it is important to leave traces of their potential, whether it be on an artistic, a historical, a scientific or another level.

*"Complementary services play an essential role in making school life stimulating, dynamic and relevant to students' interests and thus maintaining their motivation."*

*Complementary Educational Services: Essential to Success*, p. 10

In class, the four teams would share the information gathered on these different aspects, as well as their comments and impressions on what they observed. The class would observe the diversity of groups using the library and the diversity of resources required to meet the needs of these groups by drafting a table outlining the services the library offers to 13- to 17-year-olds and to citizens in general.

Individually, each student would write a letter to the municipal council highlighting the importance of the library as a public service and providing three arguments that municipal counsellors could use to justify maintaining or increasing the budget allocated to the municipal library in order to respond to the evolving needs of the community.

Students would make a list of the important events in the life of the chosen historical figure. After discussing this information in teams, they would identify the values that this person upheld. The students would then determine how they could put one or several of these values into practice today to improve the quality of life in their environment. A project could be undertaken to this end. The young people could even become associated with a group that provides international aid.

**The Québec Education Program favours the integration of all subjects, based on contemporary problems pertaining to health and well-being, personal and career planning, media literacy, environmental awareness and consumer rights and responsibilities, as well as citizenship and community life.**

These broad areas of learning determine the educational aims and the focuses of development that guide teachers in creating learning situations intended to help students make connections between what they learn in the different subjects and their everyday lives. The broad areas of learning enable students to relate the different subjects and to look critically at elements of their personal and social environment.

Convinced that the broad areas of learning are essential to young people's education and that school is the ideal place to bring them together, various ministries and governmental organizations have put their creativity to use to provide the school network with materials that are attractive and relevant.

Since January 2001, close to 20 ministries and organizations have been working to adapt school activities and materials in order to support the learning of all students.

*Schoolscapes* presents some of these resources.

## CITIZENSHIP AND COMMUNITY LIFE

### Educational aim:

*To enable students to take part in the democratic life of the classroom or the school and develop an attitude of openness to the world and respect for diversity.*


# Young Voters

This fall, the Chief Electoral Officer of Québec is launching the Young Voters site as part of its revamped Web site. This is a new source of ideas and a place to share educational practices pertaining to democratic life. The site will provide a variety of tools to develop election or referendum projects at the elementary, secondary, college and university levels.

Such tools will include:

- instructional materials
- training sessions and workshops
- reports
- discussion forums

Young Voters: a dynamic forum for all those who are interested in democratic education in Québec.

www.jeuneselecteurs.qc.ca

LE DIRECTEUR GÉNÉRAL DES ÉLECTIONS DU QUÉBEC

## ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS AND CONSUMER RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

**Educational aim:**

*To encourage students to develop an active relationship with their environment while maintaining a critical attitude toward consumption and the exploitation of the environment.*

## HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

**Educational aim:**

*To ensure that students develop a sense of responsibility for adopting good living habits with respect to health, safety and sexuality.*

# Taxes in Québec: Who Benefits from Our Tax Dollars?

The Ministère du Revenu has produced instructional material entitled *Taxes in Québec: Who Benefits from Our Tax Dollars?* The purpose is to introduce young people to Québec taxation policies and to help them understand the rationale for taxation from a perspective of social equity and respect.

There are two versions:

- the first, for teachers and students in Elementary Cycle Three (grades 5 and 6)
- the second, for teachers and students of the Secondary V Economics course

The material for both elementary and secondary levels includes a teacher's guide and an activity book for students. Students are also invited to enter a contest.

A new version of the instructional material is published each year (both in French and in English). It is sent free of charge to the appropriate teaching staff in January.

Revenu Québec

# Tools to Facilitate the Teaching of Science and Technology

Développement économique et régional
Québec

As part of its mandate to support scientific and technical culture and to promote careers in science and technology, the Ministère du Développement Économique et Régional is supporting the production of tools to facilitate the teaching of science and technology within the context of the reform. Here are some resources to discover:

*Kaleidoscope*: A database for teachers and librarians, with ideas and applications for teaching science and technology.

www.spst.org/kaleidoscope/index.html

*Assistance for the Upcoming Generation of Students in Science and Technology*: a financial assistance program to support the development of projects in the teaching community.

To find out more about the program and the complete list of projects funded, consult the Ministère's Web site.

www.mrst.gouv.qc.ca/_an/programmes/aide-releve/aide_releve.html

To access the consulting service in order to obtain information on funding from one of the government programs related to the science and technology sectors, log on to the following site.

http://www.mder.gouv.qc.ca

Contact Francine Lacroix at (418) 643-1325, 1 (877) 511-5889 or by e-mail: francine.lacroix@mrst.gouv.qc.ca

**Educational aim:**

*To enable students to exercise critical, ethical and aesthetic judgment with respect to the media and produce media documents that respect individual and collective rights.*

## PERSONAL AND CAREER PLANNING

**Educational aim:**

*To enable students to make and carry out plans designed to develop their potential and help them integrate into adult society.*

Besides television programming that fosters learning and a taste for discovery, Télé-Québec offers educational content, in collaboration with the Ministère de l'Éducation du Québec.

The collection of educational videos includes over 2 300 titles for school use. The documents are available on VHS cassette or in MPEG electronic file format. A catalogue that can be accessed over the Internet allows teachers to select and order the videos of their choice.

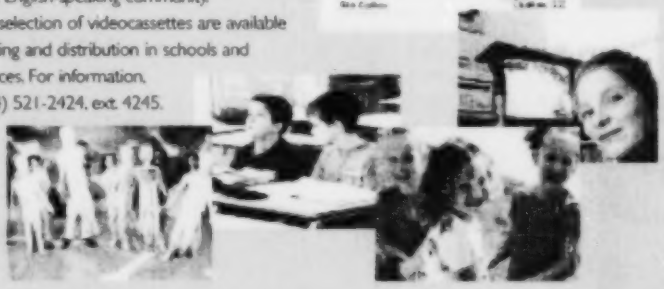
http://video.telequebec.tv

Télé-Québec
telequebec.tv

Produced with some of the most innovative partners in the education network, *Carrefour Éducation* offers teachers fast links to the best ICT resources on the Internet: surveyed sites, pedagogical activities, software reviews and a whole lot more!

http://carrefour-education.telequebec.tv

The **Services à la clientèle anglophone** provides resources and services to the Québec English-speaking community. A wide selection of videocassettes are available for viewing and distribution in schools and workplaces. For information, call (514) 521-2424, ext. 4245.



## *Town Hall Two*

*Town Hall Two–The Learner-Centred High School* is a series of four videos focusing on the implementation of the new Québec Education Program in secondary schools. It is intended to help secondary school communities explore issues, in theory and practice, surrounding the implementation of the QEP. The goal is to spark discussion, develop an understanding of concepts and point to some practical approaches consistent with the philosophy of the reform. It complements the first series, *Town Hall One–The Learner-Centred Classroom*, which was based in an elementary school setting. Both series were produced to help educational communities in their QEP journey.

The videos were produced in cooperation with educators, parents and students representing English schools in Québec. The target audience includes teachers, parents, administrators, students or anyone else who has questions about the implementation of the QEP in secondary school. A Facilitator's Guide is included in the video package.

**Every school board will be supplied with copies of the Town Hall Two video free of charge.**

For more information or additional copies, please contact:

**Kevin O'Donnell—Télé-Québec**
Services à la clientèle anglophone
Phone: 514-521-2424, ext. 4245
E-mail: kevin.odonnell@telequebec.qc.ca

Sponsored by the Implementation Design Committee (IDC): Télé-Québec, Services à la clientèle anglophone; and the Ministère de l'Éducation, Services à la communauté anglophone, this project is partially funded by the Ministère de l'Éducation and makes use of contributions from the Canada-Québec Agreement for Minority Language Education and Secondary Language Instruction.

By Eve Kokkos

## Project Collaboration Science Series:

# New Materials Provide for Science

The series consists of three booklets, *Material World–Simple Machines and Inventions, Earth and Space–Water and Weather*; and *Living Things–Environment and Plants*. The booklets contain activities that reflect the competency-based approach and the content of the Québec Education Program.

This resource is one of the outcomes of a three-year initiative led by Dr. Brian Alters, education professor at McGill University, in which hundreds of teachers from across the province worked with science and education graduate students from McGill University to create science and technology activities for elementary and secondary school classrooms.

Called Project Collaboration, the endeavour was funded by a $670,000 grant from Lucent Technologies, an international corporation based in the U.S., which invited universities to submit projects to help improve science education. Of the 11 grants awarded worldwide, McGill University was the only Canadian recipient.

Working in 55 groups of about 5 people each (usually three teachers, one science graduate student and one education graduate student), the participants used the university's science teaching laboratories to explore science learning and to research and develop science education activities.

**The Learning Materials Centre was established by the English Educational Resources Foundation (EERF), a non-profit initiative of the Directors General of the English School Boards of Québec, supported by the Ministère de l'Éducation through the Canada-Québec Agreement for Minority Language Education and Second Language Instruction. Its mandate is to provide teaching and learning materials and resources to support English-language curriculum delivery. An agreement between the Ministère de l'Éducation and the EERF signed in the summer of 2003 will ensure that the Learning Materials Center increases the scope of its involvement in provinding such ressources.**

Visit the Web site at <www.eerflmc.qc.ca>

# Framework Activities

"This kind of collaboration is very unusual," said Dr. Alters. For he explains that while it is common for science teachers to validate materials developed by teachers, or vice-versa, "rarely do you have education researchers, science people and teachers working together from the ground up." The MEQ actively supported the initiative, providing personnel from the Services à la communauté anglophone (SCA) to assist with the project over the three-year period.

Dr. Alters noted that in addition to the activities created, one of the main benefits of the project was the in-service training of the 138 participating teachers from 100 elementary and secondary schools, as they explored constructivism and science education.

The activities produced over the three years have been compiled in a 1406-page book and on CD-ROM. However, to make the material more accessible to all teachers, some fine-tuning was required. The Learning Materials Centre was therefore approached to publish materials in line with the education reform based on the Project Collaboration activities. (The Centre, created in the fall of 2000, has a mandate to support English schools by developing teaching and learning materials in line with the QEP.)

The three booklets are the fruit of this partnership. Michel Lafontaine, Executive Director of the Centre, explains that the series provides a framework to help teachers better understand how to implement a socioconstructivist approach in the teaching of science. "We show what the teachers can do with these activities. We use an inquiry-based and project-based approach, making links with the science competencies, the cross-curricular competencies and the broad areas of learning."

The booklets are split into themes according to the essential knowledges that students in Elementary Cycle Two and Cycle Three must acquire. *Material World*, the first manual of the series, contains a unit on Simple Machines with six challenging activities, and a unit on Inventions with two exciting research events. *Earth and Space* contains one unit on Water and one on Weather, each with five activities. The third manual, *Living Things*, contains a unit on the Environment (eight activities) and a unit on Plants (five activities).

The series was launched officially on June 25, 2003, at the Building Curriculum Links Conference (organized by MAPCO, SAPCO, HGTF and the MEQ and held at John Rennie High School in Pointe Claire). All three booklets are available for $40.00 plus tax and handling. (The 1406-page book containing the initial draft activities from the three-year project is being provided free to the first 175 schools that order the series.) To order or for more information, contact the Learning Materials Centre at (514) 685-6777 or visit the Web site.

*"Rarely do you have education researchers, science people and teachers working together from the ground up."*

By Marie-Hélène Giguère
(Translation)

# New Ways of Organizing Time and Space

Why should schools change? According to the Conseil supérieur de l'éducation, "implementation of this new learning approach can succeed only under certain conditions, including the need for greater flexibility in the organization of school time." [1] Reorganizing school time would allow teachers more opportunities to work together, placing the organization of the school at the service of education, rather than being centred on administrative concerns.

Concretely, how can such changes be implemented while ensuring that the school continues to function smoothly? Four secondary schools were chosen to experiment with reorganizing time and space: Symmes Junior High School in Aylmer, École Sainte-Anne in Daveluyville, the Petit Séminaire de Québec and École Sacré-Cœur in Granby. The experiments took different shapes, explained Russell Gilbert, training analyst and support person for educational systems at the Société GRICS.

First, schools modified their schedules. Not only does the length of periods now vary from one school to another, but it also varies within a given school. This feature enables teachers to adjust the periods according to the educational activities planned (rather than the educational activity being adjusted to fit the period). Some schools have also put aside the nine-day schedule with four periods per day and adopted the calendar week instead, allowing them to adapt student schedules to those of their parents.

Some schools have decided to send students home at different times on different days of the cycle or the week in order to give the school team time for meetings and discussion. In such cases, students are taken care of by the community or by their families. Other schools have obtained parents' consent to let students sleep in one day of the week; for example, students might start school a little later on Wednesdays.

These target schools also worked to develop homeroom systems that would provide students with a more stable structure. One teacher sees the same group of students for several subjects, and classrooms are chosen according to the students rather than the subject matter.

During this experimentation period, teachers have been responsible for part of the time management; in other words, certain times in the schedule are not designated for a specific subject, but rather for complementary activities. These periods can therefore be used for multidisciplinary activities.

The société GRICS concludes that school personnel first need to understand the reasons behind the existing structure before coming up with alternative, more desirable organizational structures. Most importantly, however, schools need to give themselves time to implement the changes. By building on their current strengths, daring to look at new models and taking things one step at a time, all the while referring to the QEP, Québec schools will succeed in organizing their time and space differently, in relevant and effective ways.[2]

*Placing school organization at the service of education*

[1] Conseil supérieur de l'éducation, *Aménager le temps autrement*. An abridged version is available in English under the title *Organizing Academic Time Differently*.

[2] Russell Gilbert, *Renouveler l'organisation scolaire*.

# The School Calendar and Daily Schedule as Educational Resources

"Enjoying the legal authority given to the governing board with regard to the organization of school time, school teams must respond to the challenge of viewing the school calendar and the daily schedule not as constraints, but as pedagogical tools. . . . The power to organize school time largely belongs to the schools." (p. 31)

"The Conseil reaffirms that the actions of secondary schools should be governed by two underlying principles:

- The organization of schedules and the school calendar must make educational sense.
- The educational culture specific to the schools must be respected when choosing how to organize the school day, week, semester or year, and when deciding how these changes will be implemented." (p. 60)

## Five principal guidelines that should be used in restructuring school time:

1) Ensure that the organization of school time promotes educational success and reflects the new learning model to be implemented, as outlined in the reform.

2) Structure school time in order to better meet the learning needs of all students.

3) Consider the harmonization of the teacher's time and the student's time as the cornerstone of the new model for structuring school time.

4) Structure school time more appropriately. This is a responsibility to be shared by all educators.

5) Structure school time by taking into account the culture specific to each secondary school in Québec.
(p. 63-66)

Web site of the Conseil supérieur de l'éducation: <www.cse.gouv.qc.ca>

The Conseil supérieur de l'éducation examined a number of initiatives already underway in schools. Above and beyond their diversity, the projects all point to the same conclusion: the organization of learning time is a factor in students' educational success. In many cases, it was found that "unblocking" a portion of school time enabled teachers to focus on the particular needs of students or to carry out cross-curricular activities.

Here are a few examples of ways in which school teams have structured time differently:

- Reducing the time allocated to certain subjects
- Allocating teaching time differently
- Combining two periods in order to take advantage of the same activity to teach many subjects
- Taking the time saved by reducing the number of breaks and eliminating the need to move from one class to another and investing it in other projects
- Creating fixed student groups
- Creating small teams of teachers who work together with these fixed groups according to a homeroom model or who lead projects by grade level
- Setting up a tutoring system
- Allowing time for teachers to work together

Excerpts are from the Conseil supérieur de l'éducation's brief entitled *Aménager le temps autrement. Une responsabilité de l'école secondaire* (April 2001). An abridged version is available in English under the title, *Organizing Academic Time Differently. A Responsibility of Secondary Schools*

By Marie Hélène Giguère
(Translation)

# From Elementary to Secondary School

Having made the transition from elementary to secondary school herself, Louise Chénard was able to observe a huge gap between the two. Although the secondary school teachers had read through the QEP once in her new position, Chénard realized that their knowledge of the evaluation tools used in elementary school—descriptive scales and report cards—was rather limited. So she called her team together for a meeting. "We talked, and I presented them with report cards. We had quite a shock: for 14 feeder schools, there were 14 different kinds of report cards," she said. "After observing and comparing, the teachers saw that the differences between what goes on in secondary school and what goes on in elementary school were significant."

The teachers at Saint-Laurent school therefore decided to invite staff from the elementary schools to participate in a half day of discussion. A variety of presentations were made, including several on the respective programs. However, the secondary school team had a specific idea in mind: they wanted the elementary teachers to produce a portfolio for each student. "Our goal was to find a way for teachers to gain a meaningful understanding of the students' report cards, by providing them with practical tools that they could consult upon the new cohort's arrival in secondary school," explained Chénard.

"The idea was well received by the feeder schools, and so we launched the project aimed at giving the elementary schools folders into which they could insert three pieces of student work." At the request of the secondary school teachers, teachers in the feeder schools agreed to send them an evaluation of each student's level of success in mathematics and French (reading and writing). "This initiative generated a substantial number of comments on both sides, and so we came to the conclusion that these meetings were very necessary."

Chénard emphasizes the importance of this kind of dialogue. "Even though the implementation of the reform does not officially begin in secondary school for another year, we will be welcoming children who have experienced the reform—children who will have developed a very different approach to learning—into our traditional learning environment. I have therefore taken it as a given that we have to move forward. We have to start building awareness among our teachers now and making changes in order to adapt to the new cohorts of students that will be arriving."

This coming year, Saint-Laurent school will organize two half days of dialogue. The formula Chénard has chosen allows participants to express themselves and talk about their concerns freely. For example, elementary school teachers have said they would like to know what happens to their young students once they reach secondary school. Secondary school teachers have expressed interest in pairing up with elementary school colleagues to see how they are implementing the reform.

In light of all that needs to be accomplished to implement the reform, Chénard believes in taking small steps. That is the pace she is setting for her team of teachers who, since the spring, have embarked on the path of making fundamental changes to their school culture and reviewing their educational practices.

*Chénard was able to observe a huge gap between elementary and secondary school.*

By Pascale Sauvé
(Translation)

# Learning from the Experiences of the Pilot Secondary Schools

The pilot schools were selected according to various criteria. These included not just their interest in the project, but characteristics such as the school's location, size, socioeconomic environment, urban or rural setting, etc., to ensure a representative sample of the various situations existing throughout Québec. Thus, there are ten French-language public schools, three English-language public schools and two private schools, from various regions across the province, presenting a variety of profiles.

Simply put, the mission of these schools is to apply the Québec Education Program. "They will provide data that will enable us to follow up on implementation of the reform step by step," said Giguère. The schools will identify difficulties encountered, needs to be fulfilled, possible solutions, successful strategies, etc. The information gathered will be distributed to all schools each year, so that others can benefit from their experience.

Before setting out on this task, the MEQ prepared the pilot schools for the leading role they were to play. An MEQ team met with school administrators several times to provide information, and organized a two-day training session for members of school teams (administrators, teachers and other school staff) who will become the resource persons in their respective schools. "For the pilot period, we are also providing support to school personnel who are training their colleagues," said Giguère. "The idea is not for the MEQ to take their place, but to help school personnel train their colleagues in a way that is best adapted to their own educational community." Each school has been assigned members of the MEQ team to assist their in-house resource persons. For English schools, the contact person is Richard Bastien of the Services à la communauté anglophone. He can be reached at (514) 873-4909.

Even though implementation of the reform in secondary school has been delayed one year, the field-testing began last September as planned. "The integration of the QEP by the pilot schools continues," said Giguère. "We will therefore have two years to experiment instead of just one." We should be hearing more and more about the pilot schools over the coming year. Stay tuned!

*The information gathered will be distributed to all schools each year, so that others can benefit from their experience.*

# THE *UN ENVOL AVEC METIS* PROJECT

Gilles Lebel, principal of the two schools, explained the innovative aspect of the educational project entitled *Un envol avec Métis*. Launched in the fall of 2001, this linguistic and cultural exchange project involves anglophone and francophone students from Metis Beach School in Metis Beach and École l'Envol in Les Boules.

One day a week, students from these two schools are partnered for their Arts and English language courses, as well as *Midi-anglais* (lunchtime English) extracurricular activities. During these meetings, students take part in multi-age workshops that strengthen their sense of community and foster educational success for all. This also helps the children to better integrate linguistic and cultural differences into their lives, and thus overcome prejudices.

Various activities, including putting on a play, allow the young people to develop the four categories of cross-curricular competencies: personal and social, communication-related, intellectual and methodological.

Throughout the school year, parents and the community at large come share the children's experiences and encourage them by participating in a host of activities. Through its involvement and support, the community contributes actively to the success of the project, which was developed thanks to an agreement between the two school boards and funds allocated by the Fonds Jeunesse Québec. Several local organizations and businesses also added their financial support. To this day, educators and participants involved with the project are proud of the success this collaboration has achieved and wish to continue this wonderful project.

We wish everyone a great school year!

SCHOOLSCAPES
WORKING TOGETHER TO INSTRUCT, SOCIALIZE AND PROVIDE QUALIFICATIONS

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